

# The grammatical items *bin*, *fɔ*, and *mɔs* in Sierra Leone Krio\*

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## Abstract

*These items, presumably derived from English 'been', 'for' and 'must', respectively, function differently in Krio from their etyma, while, in the case of fɔ and mɔs, sharing similar uses. This paper tries to appraise descriptions of the functions of bin, fɔ, and mɔs in the literature with regard to their applicability to Krio and discusses uses that do not seem to have hitherto appeared in accounts of Krio grammar. For example, fɔ shares many functions with the Caribbean English Creole (CEC) alternants fu/fi; however, it also has other functions not found in CEC but relatable to uses of English 'should' in the realis modality. With regard to mɔs, apart from its epistemic and deontic uses, which correspond, more or less, to similar uses of English 'must', Krio mɔs has at least two other auxiliary uses which are probably not shared by other creoles. The description of bin as a [+anterior] tense marker is also considered misleading, at least for Krio.*

## 1. Introduction

The literature on CEC contains much discussion of the particles *BIN* (and its cognates *ben*, *en*, *min*, *wen*, etc.) and especially *Fɔ* (more usually occurring as *fu* or *fi* in CEC).<sup>1</sup> But there is little recent information on how these items function in a West African sister creole that is also English-related, Krio.<sup>2</sup> In this paper, I shall try to present such information. I have decided to include *mɔs* in the study because of its relatedness to *fɔ* in some of the latter's modal-auxiliary uses. Using evidence from the way these items function in Krio, I shall also give my views on their possible etymologies and make some remarks about the implications for superstratum, substratum, and universal influences on these aspects of Krio grammar.

In this paper, *bin* in Krio is described as a past-tense marker, *fɔ* is

treated as functioning as a preposition, a complementizer, and a modal auxiliary, and *mɔs* is described as a modal auxiliary. We shall first discuss *bin*.

## 2. The past-tense marker *bin*

*BIN* seems universal in English-related creoles. It has been described as a past-tense marker, a remote-past (tense) marker, a historic (past) tense marker, and an anterior tense or aspect marker.

Bickerton and other scholars, following him, have postulated an anterior tense system for nonacrolectal varieties of English creoles, marked by *BIN*, which has a simple past meaning when used with stative verbs, but a past-before-the-past meaning when used with nonstative verbs, 'something like (though by no means identical with) English pluperfect' (1979: 309). He claims that present states as well as past actions are marked in the same way, that is, [−anterior], by  $\emptyset$  before the main verb in its stem form, while the [+anterior] marker *BIN* obligatorily applies to the earlier of any two states or actions when both are simultaneously under discussion (1979: 311). In Bickerton's later writings, the role of *BIN* as a [+anterior] tense marker is presented as a feature of the 'bioprogram'.

I wish to argue, however, that from evidence found in Krio, it is difficult to accept Bickerton's claim about the universality of these functions of *BIN* in creoles. First, a Krio stative verb stem is not always nonpast, as Bickerton asserts (for example, 1975b: 29). As the following examples show, it can be past in reference:

- (1) *a si yu we a lef os.*  
'I saw you when I left home.'
- (2) *a sik las wik.*  
'I was ill last week.'

Even without a temporal adverbial, the context may require a past interpretation:

- (3) *misef fil am bad.*  
'I too felt it very much.'

For some stative verbs, however, *bin* seems obligatory for clarity of past-time reference for many speakers. Two examples follow:

- (4) *a bin no di ansa bɔt a dɔn fɔget am.*  
'I once knew the answer but I've forgotten it.'

- (5) *Ayɔ bin lɔv Ade we den na bin neba.*  
 'Ayo loved Ade when they were neighbors.'

Second, *bin* can be used as an optional simple past-tense marker with dynamic verbs, as in

- (6) *a (bin) go chɔch sɔnde.*  
 'I went to church on Sunday.'  
 (7) *Olu (bin) it ɔl in res?*  
 'Did Olu eat all his rice?'

Third, *bin* is not obligatory in sentences in which two nonsimultaneous states or actions are being spoken about simultaneously in the same discourse,<sup>3</sup> for example,

- (8) *Jo (bin) bruk, ayen en it bifo i go slip. We i wek i kɔmɔt.*  
 'Joe laundered, ironed, and ate before he went to sleep. When he woke up he went out.'

*Bin* can even be used, optionally, to mark both the earlier and the later of two actions in such a discourse:

- (9) *a (bin) tɔk pan am bifo a (bin) kɔmɔt.*  
 'I scolded him before going out.'

Even more challenging to Bickerton's claims is the fact that *bin* can mark only the LATER, and not the EARLIER of two sequential actions:

- (10) *wen a it dɔn, a (bin) go tɔng.*  
 'When I finished eating, I went to town.'

Hence (11) would be unacceptable:

- (11) \**wen a bin it dɔn a (bin) go tɔng.*

Givón considers Bickerton's description of *BIN* 'inherently correct' but says that it must be supplemented by the

*discourse-pragmatic* characterization of the function of the anterior, observing that it marks out-of-sequence clauses in narrative, specifically those which 'look-back' and relate events that occurred *earlier than the preceding clause in the narrative* ...

*Actual sequence of events: A, B, C, D*

*Order of reporting in narrative: A, C, B, D ...*

Clauses A, C, D ... will be marked by the O form ..., Clause B ... will be marked by the anterior 'bin', since it appears in the narrative AFTER C but occurred actually BEFORE it (1982: 121).

In support, Givón cites the following from Bickerton's Hawaiian Creole data:

- (12) a. ... I *go* out of the way,  
 b. I *fix* that dog up ...  
 c. that dog *bin* come nice 'n fat,  
 d. all the hair *bin* grow ...  
 e. I *spray-im* with malathion 'n all,  
 f. I *bring-im* down the beach special ...  
 ... So I went out of my way, I fixed that dog up ... the dog had become nice and fat, all his hair had grown back ... I sprayed him with malathion, I brought him down to the beach specially ...'

And

- (13) a. ... so he *tell* me: 'What vinile?'  
 b. The guy, bugger, he never even *known*,  
 c. He [the Mexican] never even tell — *bin* tell-im before ...  
 '... so (that other guy) told me: 'What vinile?' The guy (the other) hadn't even known about it (the Mexican) had never told him (about our deal) ...'

Krio translations of (12) and (13) are as follows:

- (14) a. ... a go awt ɔf mi we,  
 b. a fix da dɔg de ɔp ...  
 c. di dɔg (*bin*) dɔn nays ɛn fat,  
 d. ɔl in ia (*bin*) dɔn gro ...  
 e. a spre am wit malation ɛn ɔl,  
 f. a bring am dɔng di bich speshal wan ...

And

- (15) a. ... so i tel mi: 'us kayn vaynil?'  
 b. Di bɔge nɔ (*bin*) ivin nɔ,  
 c. i nɔ *bin* ɛva dɔn tel am bifo.

Evidently, *BIN* is not used in the same way in all English-related creoles: where Hawaiian Creole uses *bin* for anterior reference, Krio uses (*bin*) *dɔn*. More evidence of the use of *bin dɔn* for anterior reference is cited from the New Testament in Krio.<sup>4</sup> A close translation follows it:

- (16) Di Gud Yus we Matyu rayt, tɔk bɔt Jizɔs we de sev wi, we Gɔd *bin dɔn* prɔmis fɔ sɛn to wi. Na tru Jizɔs Gɔd du ɔl wetin I *bin dɔn* prɔmis fɔ du fɔ In pipul den na di Ol Testament.  
 'The Good News which Matthew wrote talks about Jesus who is

saving us, who God had promised to send to us. It is through Jesus God did all what He had promised to do for His people in the Old Testament.'

Givón (1982: 150) also comments on the role of *dɔn* as an incipient perfect/anterior marker in Krio; I shall return to this below.

In accordance with the TMA order which Bickerton (for example, 1984: 182) observes in creoles, *bin* usually occupies the tense position immediately before the main verb, with any modal and/or aspectual auxiliaries intervening. In Krio, unlike normal or formal English, two modal auxiliaries, usually *fɔ/go + mɔs*, can cooccur in the same clause. The aspectuals include nonpunctual *de* and perfective/completive *dɔn*. The negator *nɔ* may immediately precede *bin*. This gives the following combinations:

(a) Conditional (irrealis) uses:

- (17) *a bin fɔ/go kam if yu bin aks mi.*  
'I would have come if you'd asked me to.'
- (18) *yu bin fɔ/go mɔs drɔnk.*  
'You would surely have been drunk.'
- (19) *yu bin fɔ/go de it naw.*  
'You would have been eating now.'
- (20) *a bin fɔ/go dɔn it.*  
'I should have eaten.'
- (21) *a bin fɔ/go dɔn de it.*  
'I should have been eating.'

(b) Past perfective (realis):

- (22) *a bin dɔn si am.*  
'I had seen him.'

(c) Past continuative (realis)

- (23) *a bin de it am.*  
'I was eating/used to eat it.'

In combination with modals and aspectuals, as in (17)–(23), *bin* is obligatory; in each case it has a past meaning. Anteriority can be unambiguously marked only by *bin dɔn*, as in (14), (15), and (16).

There is also a, stylistic rather than grammatical, use of *bin* similar to the English 'attitudinal past' (Quirk et al. 1985: 188), used with verbs expressing volition or mental state, reflecting a tentative attitude of the speaker, rather than past time, as in

(24) Could I talk to you now? I wanted to see you about the rent.

An example in Krio is

(25) *a bin wan si yu tide, sa.*

'I wanted to see you today, sir.'

This use is striking in Krio for two reasons: (i) it has been a nonacrolectal feature for over 50 years, so it is not a recently acquired decreolization feature; (ii) it shows that *bin* is a true past-tense marker in Krio, to the extent that it may have taken on one of the functions of the English 'past tense'.

I shall now return to Givón's comments on *dɔn* (the perfective aspect marker) in the role of anterior marker in Krio. Givón claims that Krio is undergoing a change typical of creoles, after the prototype TAM features have been established, 'from an anterior/sequential aspectual system toward a past/nonpast TENSE system ... In the meantime, another marker *dɔn* "finish" (\*"done") is slowly establishing itself as the perfect/anterior marker most likely to replace *bin*' (1982: 150).

In fact, in the *bin dɔn* combination, *bin* is deletable, but *dɔn* is not. This suggests that, if Givón is correct, *dɔn* may have already taken over from *bin* as an anterior marker. However, this anterior use of *dɔn* is not a recent development, since it is even attested in the speech of octogenarian basilectal speakers, as in the following example:

(26) *so a go mit am, bɔt da tɛn de a dɔn tot mi faya fɔs.*  
so I go meet him, but that time there I PERF. tote my fire first  
'So I went to meet him, but before that I had drunk heavily.'

I therefore doubt whether Givón is right that this development is a postcreole one. Apart from the above counterevidence, it does not fulfil Bickerton's criterion for such a change: 'In spontaneous change, an already existing form or structure acquires a new meaning, function or distribution. In decreolization, an already existing function or meaning acquires a new form or structure' (1980: 113).

Nor is it a postcreole feature that is now found in Krio because the language 'has come under renewed vigorous influence from its original lexifier language, involving the restructuring and/or replacement of earlier ... grammar in favour of patterns from the superimposed "target" language' (Mühlhäusler 1986: 237).

### 3. The particle *fɔ*

The functions of *fɔ* in Krio only partly correspond to those of *Fɔ* in West African Pidgin English (WAPE) and CEC. Since words in a pidgin or

creole are often subject to a high degree of multifunctionality, it is not advisable to assign them to word-class categories out of context. *Fɔ* is such a word. It has been described in the literature as preposition, modal auxiliary, main verb (in some creoles, it can even be tensed), and complementizer. Washabaugh (for example, 1975) argues that *Fɔ* was originally a preposition and derives from this all its other functions in CEC.<sup>5</sup> Bickerton maintains that all the functions of *Fɔ* in English-related creoles (like *pu* in French creoles and *pa* in Portuguese creoles) derive from a verb — another bioprogram feature (1980: 117–118, 1984: 181–182). Winford (1985), for his part, laments the separation of the functions of *Fɔ* into modal (or ‘preposition cum complementizer’) vs. preposition, a separation which, he says, is probably forced on us by, among other things, ‘too strict a reliance on the model of S[andard] E[n]glish grammar, and preconceived notions of the boundaries of grammatical categories. Such a separation of functions obscures the common semantic element that underlies every use of *fi*’ (1985: 621–622). Winford advocates that we treat ‘all the prepositional and verbal uses of this particle as realizations of a common semantic element that might be labeled “directional”’ (1985: 622).

There is greater agreement about the role of *Fɔ* as a preposition and as a modal auxiliary than as a complementizer or infinitive marker (see Mufwene and Dijkhoff 1986; Mufwene 1989), though some studies (for example, Byrne 1984; Huttar 1985) do not seem to find the latter issue problematic.

I shall treat Krio *Fɔ* in three classes: (a) as a preposition, meaning ‘for’; (b) as a complementizer, usually meaning ‘to’; and (c) as a modal auxiliary, meaning ‘should’.

### 3.1 *fɔ* as a preposition

*Fɔ* occurs as a preposition in CEC, WAPE, and Krio, although it seems to have a wider occurrence in the African languages. While its behavior reveals a decided affinity among the three ‘groups’ of languages, it also gives some evidence to justify our regarding them as a trichotomy.

*Fɔ* is used in all three language areas as a benefactive preposition, as in the following examples:

- CEC:  
 (27) *dɛm a fait fi wi.*  
 ‘They are fighting for us’ (J[amaican] C[reole]; B. Bailey 1966).

WAPE:

- (28) *wetin yu bay fɔ mi-o?*  
 'What have you bought for me?'

Krio:

- (29) *a bay ʊmbrela fɔ yu.*  
 'I bought an umbrella for you.'

It is also used as a directional preposition in all the languages, but in a way in which it is not used in Krio or English. For example, the CEC sentence

- (30) *an wi staat gaan fi riif.*  
 'And we started going to the reef' (P[rovidence] I[sland] C[reole]; Washabaugh 1975).

is similar to WAPE

- (31) *mi, a bin kam fɔ stik.*  
 'I came to the tree' (Todd 1974: 16).

The Krio versions of (30) and (31) are much closer to English, as is the directional use of *fɔ* in (34):

- (32) *en wi bigin (fɔ) go to di rɔk dem.*  
 'And we started going to the reef.'  
 (33) *a kam to di tik.*  
 'I came to the tree.'  
 (34) *dis na di tren fɔ Bo.*  
 'This is the train for Bo.'

As in Saramaccan (SM), *fɔ* is also used in Krio to express a situation similar to but not identical with what Byrne (1984: 104) has referred to as 'secondary theme', common with verbs signifying a commercial transaction, as in

- (35) *a go bit yu den a go pe fɔ yu.*  
 'I'll beat you up and then pay for you' (that is, face the consequences).

This is where the similarities of the prepositional uses of *Fɔ*, in Krio on the one hand, and CEC and WAPE on the other, stop.

*Fɔ* can have a locative meaning in PIC (Washabaugh 1975: 116) and SM (Byrne 1984: 103), as well as in WAPE, but not in Krio. Also, CEC, but not Krio, uses *Fɔ* in possessive constructions (36) and in a lexical unit corresponding to English 'afraid of' (37):

- (36) *dat a fi mi buk.*  
 'That's my book' (JC; Winford 1985: 589).



- (37) *ai me fred fi i sniek.*

'I was afraid of the snake' (PIC; Washabaugh 1980).

In Krio, these sentences would be

- (38) *dat na mi buk.*

'That's my book' and

- (39) *a bin fred di snek.*

'I was afraid of the snake.'<sup>6</sup>

WAPE does not seem to have possessive *Fɔ*, although it has analytic phrases like *mɔp fɔ bɔbi*='nipple' (Hancock 1985: 12) (compare Krio: *bɔbimɔt*).

No other prepositional uses of *Fɔ* in CEC seem to have been highlighted in the literature. In WAPE, however, *fɔ* functions as a multipurpose preposition with a core directional or locational meaning, similar to *na* in Krio (compare *long* in Tok Pisin; see for example Mühlhäusler 1986: 160) Schneider (1966: 75) notes that *fɔ* in WAPE can be used to mean 'in', 'to', 'for', 'against', 'on', 'of', 'at', 'into', 'by', 'from', 'with' and 'during'.

We have so far noted three prepositional uses of *fɔ* in Krio: (a) the benefactive, as in example (29); (b) the directional, as in (34); and (c) the 'secondary-theme' use, as in (35). Each of these corresponds to a use of 'for' in English (though [35] may not be the best example of such a use). Many other prepositional uses of *fɔ* in nonacrolectal Krio also demonstrate similarities with English, from which they appear to have been borrowed; the following sample is far from exhaustive.

- (40) duration:

*a tap de fɔ tri mɔnt.*

'I stayed there for three months.'

- (41) psychological cause:

*a go it fɔ lɔv sek.*

'I'll eat for love's sake.'

- (42) logical cause:

*dis bit na fɔ yu fityay.*

'This beating is because of your cheekiness.'

- (43) nonbenefactive purpose:

a. *i kin du enitin fɔ mɔni.*

'He can do anything for money.'

b. *a dɔn set trap fɔ yu.*

'I've set a trap for you'.

c. *a bay ten katun bia fɔ mi pati.*

'I bought ten cartons of beer for my party.'

- (44) 'instead of':

*mek a go di mitin fɔ̃ yu.*

'Let me go to the meeting instead of you.'

- (45) comparison:

*dis pikin luk big fɔ̃ tu ia.*

'This child looks big for a two-year-old.'

- (46) support, empathy:

- a.
- nɔ̃ wɔ̃ri, titi, a de fɔ̃ yu.*

'Don't worry, girl, I'm on your side.'

- b.
- a fred fɔ̃ di po pikin.*

'I was afraid for [that is, that something might happen to] the poor child' (compare note 6).

Apart from these Englishlike uses of *fɔ̃* as a preposition, I have also discovered five other uses that may be unique to Krio and are probably the result of internal developments. *Fɔ̃* may have been one of the earliest-acquired prepositions from English and its use may have been overgeneralized to structures like examples (47)–(53). This overgeneralization and probable influence from substrate African languages is also manifested (with differences of detail) in the uses of *Fɔ̃* in WAPE and CEC.

The first peculiarly Krio use of *fɔ̃* as a preposition is also noted by Hancock (1985: 31), who writes, 'When comparing age, Krio can optionally use *fɔ̃*'. I here give his examples as (47) and (48):

- (47)
- a big fɔ̃ yu.*

'I'm older than you.'

- (48)
- yu smɔ̃l fɔ̃ mi.*

'You're younger than I.'

This seems to be an extension of the 'comparison with the norm' use of *fɔ̃* noted above. Here *fɔ̃* is used as an alternative to the more universally creolelike serial verb construction with the verb *pas* < '(sur)pass', as in:

- (49)
- yu smɔ̃l pas mi.*

'You're younger than I.'

A second additional use of *fɔ̃* has the meaning 'with regard to', in a meliorative or derogatory sense. In the former connotation, it comes in a phrase used to enquire about the state of a sick or distressed person: *aw i tan fɔ̃* lit. 'how it stands for' = 'how are things with'; in the latter, it occurs in the phrase: *as(k) fɔ̃* 'as for':

- (50) a.
- aw i tan fɔ̃ yu grani tide?*

'How are things with your grandmother today?'

- b.
- as(k) fɔ̃ you, na rɔ̃m ba yu go day.*

'As for you, you'll die in a pub.'

A third, mildly hortative use has the structure in (51), where the optional subject is coreferential to the pronoun object of *fɔ*:

- (51) (subject) + (neg.) + (imperative) verb + (complement) + *fɔ*  
+ pronoun

as in

- (52) *nɔ mɛn am fɔ yu.*  
lit. 'no mind him/her for you' = 'take no notice of him/her.'

Fourth, *fɔ* can be used to mean 'about', as in

- (53) *mi nɔ no fɔ yu o, bɔt mi de go.*  
'I don't know about you, but I am going.'

Finally, *fɔ* as a preposition can be used to mean 'by' indicating 'having (the stated person or animal) as a father', as in

- (54) *i bɔn tu pikin fɔ mi ɔnkul.*  
'She had two children by my uncle.'

### 3.2. *fɔ* as a complementizer<sup>7</sup>

Much of the discussion about the functions of *Fɔ* in CEC has been about its role as an apparent complementizer. The main question that has been addressed is whether the presumed resemblance of this *Fɔ* particularly to English preinfinitival 'to' goes beyond the surface. Some scholars have argued that the question does not even arise, since probably no creoles have nonfinite verbs (for example, Bickerton 1980: 117; Washabaugh 1975) or since the basilects of Atlantic pidgins and creoles have no finite/definite distinction (for example, Mufwene 1986: 24, note 6; Mufwene and Dijkhoff 1986: 1).

Bickerton (1984: 179), for example, asserts that a creole grammar cannot generate sentences with nonfinite clauses and gives the example 'To see Bill is impossible.' But Winford (1985: 606), responding to Roberts's (1980: 30) assertion that *fi* does not occur as an infinitive marker in JC, acknowledges that such structures have been attested elsewhere in CEC (for example, *fi kech taiga na bin iizi* 'To catch a jaguar wasn't easy'; G[uyanese] C[reole] Bickerton 1981: 114) but says that they appear to represent relatively new developments in the grammar of these CECs, not necessarily mesolectal innovations induced by the kinds of decreolization changes usually reported in the literature: 'It implies that one effect of SE pressure may not be merely shifts in the function of CEC

forms, but reanalysis of CEC constituent structure' (1985: 612). He goes on to observe that such restructuring still does not seem to have reached the point at which infinitives with lexical subjects can appear in subject position, as in '(*fi jan fi kech taiga*) *na bin iizi*'.

The following sentences are, however, quite normal in basilectal Krio:

(55) *fɔ si Bil nɔ ɔsibul.*

'To see Bill is impossible.'

(56) *fɔ Jɔn fɔ kech di jagwa nɔ bin izi.*

lit. 'For John to catch the jaguar was not easy.'

It therefore seems that, unlike the Caribbean situation, basilectal Krio uses *fɔ* as a preinfinitive particle and that the *fɔ*–*fɔ* structure, as in (56), is a constituent. This is not to say, however, that all instances of preverbal *fɔ* are infinitival in the sense of 'to' in English.

Although a detailed examination of the functions of *fɔ* as a complementizer in Krio has not been undertaken in this study, we can make a few observations about this kind of *fɔ* in Krio. First, we should note that no preverbal *to* (or any phonological reflex of it) exists as a viable feature in any lect of Krio, unlike CEC in which there is the possibility of alternating between *Fɔ* and *tu*. Larimore observes that this kind of *to* in Krio 'is limited to certain expressions such as *a min to se* 'I mean to say' and *ɔlman fil to se ...* 'everyone feels that' (1976: 25). But the correct translation of the first example is, 'I thought that ...'. In both examples, the complementizer is actually *se* ('that'), reinforced by a meaningless, noninfinitival *to*.

Next, we may turn to the use of *fɔ* in adverbial purpose clauses in Krio. This *Fɔ* is also used in WAPE and CEC, but there are some differences. Purpose clauses can be expressed in at least three ways in Krio: by the use of *fɔ*, by the use of *fɔ ... fɔ*, or by the use of (*fɔ*) *mek*. An example of the first use is

(57) *a go fɔ si di man.*

'I went to see the man.'

This is the kind of *fɔ* Bickerton describes as a particle which refers to purposes intended, though not necessarily achieved — another bioprogram feature. *Fɔ* in this structure is syntactically deletable, but deleting it would result in the semantic consequence of obliterating any purposive import that is asserted when it is part of the structure. In other words,

(58) *a go si di man.*

'I went to see the man.'

(note that the structure need not be *a go go si di man*, as Bickerton would

insist) asserts that I went and actually saw the man, whereas (57) only states that I went with the purpose of seeing the man and may not have seen him. *Fɔ* here seems to behave like a modal auxiliary, since it imposes a kind of modal interpretation on the verb it precedes. This is not to aver that *fɔ* here is in fact a modal auxiliary. Although, as has often been demonstrated in the literature, preverbal *Fɔ* in creoles does not exactly function like infinitival *to* in English, an observation by Radford (1988: 305) about this *to* in English is called to mind: 'Modals and the infinitive particle "to" are members of the same category'.

Another example of the use of this kind of *fɔ* is

- (59) *a bring dis man fɔ wok.*  
'I've brought this man to work.'

Compare this with

- (60) *a bring dis man kam wok.*  
'I've brought this man to work.'

Both (59) and (60) have the same surface translation in English but different deeper semantic interpretations. (59) implies that I have brought the man to do or find work (that is, he is probably looking for work), whereas (60) implies that I have brought the man to his place of work (that is, he already has work).

Examples (57)–(60) help to prove the point that the presence of *fɔ* in such structures is vital for a purpose reading. This raises questions about Larimore's claim (1976: 34) that Krio *fɔ* meaning 'in order to' or 'to' is sometimes optional in circumstances where it is not in English, as in the following examples:

- (61) a. *i tek di ka go bay bred.*  
b. *i tek di ka fɔ go bay bred.*  
'He took the car (in order to) buy bread.'  
(62) a. *a fos am go na kɔnsat.*  
b. *a fos am fɔ go na kɔnsat.*  
'I forced him (to) go to (the) concert.'  
(63) a. *i gri go*  
b. *i gri fɔ go*  
'He agreed (to) go.'

She acknowledges that deleting *fɔ* in each of these sentences has semantic implications but describes the difference as one of emphasis. She even suggests that (63a) and (63b) do not have an 'easily statable' distinction. However, as we have seen, in the case of (57)–(60), each sentence without *fɔ* asserts outright that the action referred to by the main verb of the

embedded clause was carried out by the subject of the matrix clause, whereas each sentence with *fɔ* makes no such assertion, but means that *fɔ* introduces a complement stating a purpose intended (but not necessarily carried out) by the subject of the matrix clause.

Next, there is the (*fɔ*) *mek* construction, which, like the English 'for ... to' infinitive, introduces a purpose clause in a way that is probably unique to Krio:

- (64) *a bring am (fɔ) mek i lan.*  
'I brought him to learn.'

Here *fɔ* is not strictly preverbal, but part of a phrasal complementizer which introduces the embedded subject. This contrasts with the synonymous construction in PIC, apparently typical of other CECs (such as Gullah; Mufwene and Dijkhoff 1986: 20):

- (65) *im drap bred skrumz fi dey fala di track.*  
'He dropped bread crumbs so that they could follow the track'  
(Washabaugh 1975: 98).

In Krio, this sentence would be

- (66) *i drɔp bred krɔms fɔ mek dem fala di trak.*

Krio purpose clauses are also expressed with a *fɔ* ... *fɔ* construction. Similar constructions occur regularly in JC and Gullah (Washabaugh 1975), but are reported to be rarer in PIC and Sranan, in which there is not always a postnominal and preverbal *fɔ*. In Krio, both *fɔ*s are obligatory. An example is

- (67) *dis ama na fɔ yu fɔ yuz.*  
'This hammer is for you to use.'

Washabaugh (1975) examines the JC example:

- (68) *i wuda nais fi jan fi go.*  
'It would be nice for John to go.'

observing that this 'double morpheme complementizer ... *fi*-1 ... *fi*-2' is similar to the English *for* ... *to* nonfinite sentential complement. Winford, however, regards the two *fis* as respectively a preposition and a modal (1985: 592, 593, 608). Mufwene and Dijkhoff (1986: 20), using examples from Gullah, agree with Winford that the second *fə* in (69) is a modal, based on the meaning of (70):

- (69) *Jiin sen dis pleit fə Geil fə sen im sam fuud.*  
'Jean sent this plate for Gail to send her some food.'

- (70) *Geil fɔ sen sam fuud.*  
 'Gail has to/must send some food.'

The modal analysis of *fɔ* in (70) is supported by *fɔ* in Krio and other creoles, but this does not prevent the second *fɔ* in (69) from being infinitival.

Other Krio examples of *fɔ* as a complementizer, paralleled more or less in WAPE and CEC, include relativizer, as in

- (71) *a'nɔ ge pɔsin fɔ tek kɔmɔt.*  
 lit. 'I no get person to take go out', 'I have no one to go out with.'

introducer of reason clauses, as in

- (72) *a sɔri fɔ yeri bɔt yu wahala.*  
 'I am sorry to hear about your misfortune.'

introducer of adjectival complements, as in

- (73) *di man at fɔ tɔk to.*  
 'the man is difficult to talk to.'

introducer of gerunds, as in

- (74) *fɔ smok nɔ gud.*  
 'smoking is not good.'

With gerunds, however, unlike all the other previously mentioned uses of the particle, *fɔ* is optionally deletable with little or no semantic consequences.

The issue of *fɔ* deletion is a very complex one and deserves more attention than it can be given here. We have seen the semantic effect of *fɔ* deletion in the case of some purposive sentences. *Fɔ* is optionally deletable after most inceptive, desiderative, and similar 'psychological' verbs, in the structure *N'' + V + /-fɔ + V*; for example,

- (75) *a bigin (fɔ) laf.*  
 'I began to laugh.'

However, it is obligatory in this structure after a few such verbs, like *stat* 'start', *op* 'hope', *min* 'mean', *disayd* 'decide', *membra* 'remind, remember'; for example,

- (76) *a stat fɔ laf.*  
 'I started to laugh.'

After a few verbs, like *shem* 'shame', *fred* 'fear', *fɔget* 'forget', *fɔ* deletion radically changes the meaning of the sentence. Compare, for example,

(77) *a fred fɔ go.*

'I was afraid to go (so I didn't)', with

(78) *a fred go.*

lit. 'I feared went,' 'I went, because I was afraid.'

After most verbs, however, such deletion has no semantic effect:

(79) *a wan (fɔ) si yu.*

'I want to see you.'

It is not easy to state categorically for which verbs *fɔ* is optional in Krio and what the consequences are, and the set of such verbs apparently differs in CEC and even in WAPE. Williams (1976: 84) suggests that the set is composed of only a small number of verbs which are semantically [+ inceptive], such as *begin* and *wan(t)*. We may note that *wan(t)* in Krio is also [+ desiderative] and in this role too favors *fɔ* deletion. Also, although *begin* and *stat* are synonymous, *fɔ* is deletable after *begin* but not after *stat*.

### 3.3 *fɔ* as a modal auxiliary

I shall now turn to the undisputed examples of modal *fɔ*. This *fɔ*, by and large, corresponds to different senses of English 'should':

a. propriety:

(80) *yu nɔ fɔ laf we yu de pre.*

'You shouldn't laugh while praying.'

b. obligation:

(81) *a (get) fɔ go pe mi rent tumara.*

'I have to go and pay my rent tomorrow.'

Hancock (1985: 31) gives *una mɔs du am* as an alternative to *una ge fɔ du am*, meaning 'you have got to do it'. There is, however, a subtle semantic difference; *mɔs* implies compulsion (compare the 'determination' use of *mɔs* below), while *get fɔ* implies obligation:

c. suggestion:

(82) *yu fɔ go fɛŋ am.*

'You should go and visit him (I suggest that you do).'

(compare [93]: *a mɔs go fɛn am*);

d. planned future:

(83) *Jems fɔ kam tumara.*

'James is (expected) to/should arrive tomorrow.'



e. supposition:

- (84) *aw a fɔ no wetin yu want?*  
 'How should I know what you want?'

(see [94] below);

f. active structure, passive meaning (contraponent):

- (85) *bitas na fɔ bit am.*  
 lit. 'bitters is to beat it' = 'bitters should be beaten'.

All of these uses operate in the irrealis modality, like all modal auxiliaries. (f) may be a use peculiar to Krio.

It is only in these undisputed modal auxiliary uses of *fɔ* that the particle can be tensed and/or negated. Its syntactic position is as follows:

(Neg: *n*) + (Tense: *bin*) + *fɔ* + / – (Modal: *mɔs*) + (Aspect: *de/dɔn*) + V.

I have found some uses of *fɔ* in Krio which correspond to English 'should' in the REALIS modality. These are striking because these uses of 'should' are relatively uncommon even in English and are instances of markedness reversal, yet they are found in basilectal Krio. They are

- (86) *a sɔprayz dat yu fɔ tɔk so.*  
 'I'm surprised that you should say that.'  
 (87) *udat a fɔ si we a go tɔng tide!*  
 'Who should I meet when I went to town today!'  
 (88) *a jɛs kɔl am mi padi. Wetin mek a fɔ kɔl am dat, we i hala pan mi!*  
 'I just called him my friend. Why should I call him that! You should have heard him shout at me!'

In these cases, *fɔ* (like 'should') is realis: it is part of a verb construct that refers to actions that actually took place. At a deeper level, it means 'did'.

#### 4. The modal auxiliary *mɔs*

We have seen some examples in which Krio *fɔ* and *mɔs* are semantically related as modal auxiliaries ([81], [82], and [84]; see also [94] below). This relationship is also observed in WAPE and CEC (Hancock 1985: 31). In JC, Roberts notes that *mus* is a higher social variant of *fi*, in a sometimes synonymous usage (1980: 29, 30). In Krio, by contrast, *mɔs* is the LOWER-status variant, whenever the two are semantically equivalent. Also, unlike JC *mus*, Krio *mɔs* cannot be used to mean 'to' when used infinitivally (see Roberts 1980).

Unlike *bin* and *fɔ*, which always have low tone in Krio, *mɔs* can carry a high tone (stable sentence-internally, but falling sentence-finally), or a low tone. When used deontically, it always carries a high tone ([89]–[91]); in its epistemic uses, it can be high ([92]) or low ([93]–[94]):

a. necessity:

- (89) *a mɔs go naw nɔ fɔ mis di tren.*  
 ‘I must leave now, so as not to miss the train.’

or in

- (90) *yu mɔs kam ambɔg mi.*  
 ‘You had to come and disturb me.’

This use of *mɔs* has a sarcastic nuance.

b. determination:

- (91) *a mɔs bit yu tide.*  
 ‘I’m determined to beat you today.’

c. putative:

- (92) *yu mɔs taya.*  
 ‘You must be tired’ (with high tone).

d. obligation:

- (93) *a mɔs go fɛn am.*  
 ‘I ought to go and visit him.’

e. supposition:

- (94) *aw a mɔs no wetin yu want?*  
 ‘How am I supposed to know what you want?’

(Compare [84]. The use of *mɔs* instead of *fɔ* here makes the question less polite.)

The negative form of *mɔs* in all these instances is *nɔ fɔ*.

Krio also uses *mɔs*, with low tone, in two other unique ways apart from the epistemic and deontic cases. The first is to make polite requests, roughly meaning ‘please’, a use different from the hortative use of ‘must’ in English. Here is an example:

- (95) *mɔs kam tumara.*  
 ‘Please come tomorrow.’

The second is to make a threat and is usually in negative structures:

- (96) *mɔs it am yu go no!*  
 ‘If you eat it you’ll know (that is, have trouble)!’

- (97) *nɔ mɔs kam!*  
 'I dare you not to come!'

As seen in this last example, the negative form of *mɔs* in these cases is *nɔ mɔs*.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has shown that many uses of Krio *bin*, *fɔ* and *mɔs* are either straight derivations from English or are English-influenced. There is little dispute that *BIN* derives from English 'been', the past participle of 'be'.<sup>3</sup> The etymology of *Fɔ* has been more controversial. Edwards (1974) and Washabaugh (1975) identify it as West African, pointing to Twi *fi*, Ewe *fe*, and Yoruba *fun*. Byrne (1984), Bickerton (for example, 1984), and Bakker (1987) argue that its origin is English. Fyle and Jones (1980: 109) derive the prepositional uses of Krio *fɔ* from English and its preinfinitival and modal auxiliary uses from Twi. Much as Winford (1985: 620–622) and Washabaugh (1975) have argued brilliantly in support of a West African source for *Fɔ*, I would like to consider two points.

First, *Fɔ* in English-related creoles behaves strikingly like *pu* in French and *pa* in Portuguese creoles (Bickerton 1984: 180) — and the etyma of these two particles have, without dispute, been taken to be the words *pour* (French) and *para* (Portuguese), which function like English 'for' — and some of the meanings of English 'for' and 'to' (and some of the meanings of 'should') overlap (compare also German *zu*). These facts suggest that we may be dealing with a universal feature here, hence the similarities in the ways *fun*, *fi*, and *fe* are used in West African languages.

Second, if *Fɔ* really originates from African sources, why is its form not *fu(n)* or *fi* or *fe* in WAPE and Krio, which are the most proximate languages to Twi, Ewe, and Yoruba, but *fɔ*, which is phonetologically closer to English 'for'? Concerning *fu* and *fi* in CEC, Byrne has convincingly argued that the source is English 'for' (1984). If prepositions and similar particles in pidgins and creoles tend to come from the superstrate, and if in the early stages of the life of these languages only one or two prepositions tended to exist in a multifunctional role, then it is plausible to argue that *fɔ* — a multifunctional preposition in WAPE, for example, and so much like English 'for' in Krio — is English-derived.

In spite of the unique uses of *mɔs* described for Krio, I know of no claims that its origin is other than English 'must'.

On the whole, therefore, the overwhelming affinities of these particles with their English counterparts indicate that a primarily English influ-

ence was at work in each case, particularly as these usages are essentially nonacrolectal and therefore cannot be the result of decreolization. In all these cases, we see how Krio has developed its own unique uses for these items, apart from English-influenced and generally pidginized/creolized ones. Some of these uses are no doubt primordial, while others are instances of *connatural* (language-internal) development, some of which had their origins in *abnatural* (externally influenced) developments (see C.-J. Bailey 1982) — influences to which all natural languages are subject.

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## Notes

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- 1. I shall use *BIN* and *Fɔ* as cover terms for these sets.
- 2. On *bin* and *ms*, see Jones 1968; on *fɔ*, see Larimore 1976, Williams 1976. None of these works is exclusively on these items.
- 3. Gibson (1983) also argues against Bickerton's anterior system analysis in Guyanese and Jamaican Creoles.
- 4. *Di Nyu Testament* 1985. This passage appears on page 1.
- 5. He ultimately tones down this claim in Washabaugh (1980: 106).
- 6. In Krio, the inclusion of *fɔ* in this sentence would give the meaning 'I was afraid that something might happen to the snake'.
- 7. In this paper, the treatment of *fɔ* as a complementizer in Krio is tentative, pending a fuller study.
- 8. Although even Bickerton once suggested 'the function of *bin* derives ... [from] West African languages generally' (1979: 313), Bickerton has now changed his stance on substratum influence in creoles: 'Substatophiles have never attempted to compare whole systems, but have picked out and compared isolated rules and features from creole and substratum languages' (1984: 184; 1986).

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